

CLAIMS

1. Expandable microwave package for holding a food product for popping, puffing or expanding in a microwave oven comprising, in combination: a bag having an interior for holding a charge of food product to be subjected to microwave energy and having a top wall including an access opening, with the bag further including a closure portion having an outer periphery of a size greater than the access opening, with the bag including a seal between the closure portion and the top wall around the access opening, with the bag expanding into an expanded condition, with the seal being generally oval in shape.

2. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the access opening and the outer periphery of the closure portion are generally oval in shape.

3. The expandable microwave package of claim 2 further comprising, in combination: an extension formed on the outer periphery of the closure portion outward of the seal.

4. The expandable microwave package of claim 3 wherein the oval shape of the outer periphery of the closure portion has a major axis and a minor axis, with the extension extending in line with the major axis.

5. The expandable microwave package of claim 4 wherein the closure portion is formed of paper having fibers having a machine direction parallel to the major axis.

6. The expandable microwave package of claim 4 wherein the top wall includes an outer periphery of a size larger than the access opening; and wherein the extension is of a size located within the outer periphery of the top wall.

7. The expandable microwave package of claim 6 wherein the outer periphery of the top wall has a substantially round shape.

8. The expandable microwave package of claim 5 further comprising, in combination: at least a first handle extending from the bag beyond the outer periphery of the top wall and in line with the major axis, with the extension located intermediate the handle and the access opening.

9. The expandable microwave package of claim 8 further comprising, in combination: a second handle extending from the bag beyond the outer periphery of the top wall diametrically opposite to the first handle.

10. The expandable microwave package of claim 8 wherein the bag has a bottom wall, with the top and bottom walls each having outer peripheries, with the top and bottom walls being directly interconnected together and adjacent to the outer peripheries; and wherein the

expandable microwave package further comprises, in combination: a second handle extending from the bag beyond the outer periphery of the bottom wall and in line with the major axis.

11. The expandable microwave package of claim 6 wherein the bag further includes first and second fold lines extending from first and second points on opposite sides of the outer periphery of the top wall, with the first and second fold lines dividing the bag into a central portion and first and second wings, with the outer periphery of the top wall of the first and second wings and the first and second wings overlaying the central portion, with the closure portion located exclusively in the central portion.

12. The expandable microwave package of claim 11 wherein the first and second fold lines are in a spaced parallel relation parallel to the major axis.

13. The expandable microwave package of claim 12 wherein the radial distance between the first and second fold lines is generally equal to a maximum width of the closure portion parallel to the minor axis, with the first and second fold lines located on opposite sides of the major axis and equidistant therefrom.

14. The expandable microwave package of claims 13 wherein the bag further includes a third fold line extending between the first and second fold lines when the first and second wings overlay the central portion, with the third fold line defining a third wing overlaying the first and second wings.

15. The expandable microwave package of claim 14 wherein the third fold line extends generally perpendicular between the first and second fold lines, with the radial distance between the outer periphery of the top wall and the third fold line is generally equal to one third of the diameter of the outer periphery of the top wall.

16. The expandable microwave package of claim 15 wherein the bag includes a fourth fold line extending between the first and second fold lines when the first and second wings overlay the central portion, with the fourth fold line defining a fourth wing overlaying the third wing.

17. The expandable microwave package of claim 16 wherein the fourth fold line extends generally parallel to the third fold line, with the radial distance between the outer periphery of the top wall and the fourth fold line being generally equal to one third of the diameter of the outer periphery of the top wall.

18. The expandable microwave package of claim 16 further comprising, in combination: a susceptor patch extending over the bottom wall and generally between the first, second, third, and fourth fold lines.

19. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the package holds food products in the form of popcorn kernels.

20. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the bag has a bottom wall, with the top and bottom walls each having outer peripheries, with the top and bottom walls being directly interconnected together adjacent to the outer peripheries.

21. The expandable microwave package of claim 20 wherein the outer peripheries of the top and bottom walls are of a substantially round shape.

22. The expandable microwave package of claim 21 wherein the top and bottom walls are formed of non-extendable flexible material, with the top and bottom walls expanding into an opposing double dome shape when the food product is popped, puffed or expanded in the microwave oven, with the interconnected outer peripheries puckering as the top and bottom walls expand into the opposing double domed shape.

23. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the seal includes a peelable closure portion which fails during microwave cooking allowing trapped steam to vent and allowing the bag to be opened to provide access to the popped, puffed or expanded food product through the access opening.

24. The expandable microwave package of claim 23 wherein the seal is a cold seal formed of natural rubber and isoprene and/or synthetic copolymers.

25. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the bag includes a bottom wall having an outer periphery, with the top wall having an outer periphery; and wherein the bottom and top walls are interconnected together adjacent to the outer peripheries by a first interconnection portion and a second interconnection portion, with the first interconnection portion extending a substantial portion of the outer peripheries, with the first interconnection portion interconnecting the outer peripheries prior to and after the introduction of the food product into the bag, with the second interconnection portion allowing separation of the outer peripheries in the second interconnection portion for the introduction of the food product in the bag and interconnecting the outer peripheries in the second interconnection portion after the introduction of the food product into the bag.

26. The expandable microwave package of claim 1 wherein the top wall includes an outer periphery; and wherein the expandable microwave package further comprises, in combination: at least a first handle extending from the bag beyond the outer periphery of the top wall.

27. The expandable microwave package of claim 26 wherein the oval shape has a major axis and a minor axis, with the handle extending in line with the major axis.

28. The expandable microwave package of claim 26 wherein the seal is a cold seal formed of natural rubber and isoprene and/or synthetic copolymers and which fails during microwave cooking allowing trapped steam to vent and allowing the bag to be opened to provide access to the popped, puffed or expanded food product through the access opening.

29. The expandable microwave package of claim 28 further comprising, in combination: an extension formed on the outer periphery of the closure portion outward of the seal.

30. The expandable microwave package of claim 1, with the seal having a major axis and a minor axis, with the seal including a first, generally semicircular, portion of a diameter generally equal to the minor axis of the generally oval shape, with the seal including second and third portions extending from the first portion and generally parallel to the major axis, with the seal further including a fourth portion extending from and interconnecting the second and third portions.

31. The expandable microwave package of claim 30 wherein the fourth portion includes an arcuate portion.

32. The expandable microwave package of claim 31 with the fourth portion being of equal size and shape as the first, generally semicircular, portion.

33. The expandable microwave package of claim 32 with the second and third portions being arcuate, with the seal being oval in shape.

34. The expandable microwave package of claim 31 wherein the fourth portion includes fifth and sixth portions extending from the second and third portions at an obtuse angle toward each other, with the fifth and sixth portions extending tangentially from the arcuate portion, with the arcuate portion having a diameter substantially less than the diameter of the first portion.

35. The expandable microwave package of claim 30 wherein the fourth portion includes fifth and sixth portions extending from the second and third portions at an obtuse angle toward each other.